United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council concludes two-day meeting on South Africa by unanimously adopting resolution inviting Secretary-General to appoint Special Representative to recommend measures to end violence and create conditions for peaceful transition to democracy in that country.

+ In special report, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says that despite the refusal of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK) to comply with the regroupment and the cantonment process, he has asked his Special Representative in Cambodia to press forward with the process, "wherever possible"; urges full compliance by all parties with Paris Agreements.

+ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that leaders of Serbian Democratic Party refuse to allow Agency to enter beseiged city of Goradze to evaluate the humanitarian needs; also reports that 15,000 Afgan refugees a day are returning to their country.

+ Chairman of Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament has left for Iraq to secure for United Nations inspection team immediate access to Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in Baghdad.

+ Introducing World Investment Report 1992, United Nations officials tell Washington Press Club developing countries need help to attract the billions of dollars in annual foreign direct investment.

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The Security Council this afternoon concluded its two-day meeting on South Africa with the adoption of a resolution inviting the Secretary-General to appoint, as a matter of urgency, a Special Representative to recommend measures which would assist in bringing an effective end to the violence in that country, and in creating conditions for negotiations leading towards a peaceful transition to a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa.

The resolution also strongly urges the South African authorities to take immediate measures to bring an effective end to the ongoing violence and to bring those responsible to justice. It also urges the international community

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to maintain the existing measures imposed by the Security Council for the purpose of bringing an early end to apartheid in South Africa.

The meeting, which was addressed by approximately 75 speakers over the two days, was called at the request of the Group of African States, in the context of a resolution by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). It was attended by the Foreign Minister of South Africa, Roelof Botha, the President of the African National Congress (ANC), Nelson Mandela, the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Gatsha Buthelezi, and by Foreign Ministers of nine African countries and leaders of the various South African parties.

Opening today's meeting, South African Foreign Minister, Roelof (Pik) Botha, indicated that his Government was committed to moving as speedily as possible towards agreement on a new constitution for South Africa. Negotiation, he said, was not the best alternative. It was the only alternative.

He further said that the causes of the violence in South Africa were both complex and multi-dimensional. However, he said, his Government, although accepting the primary responsibility for maintaining order, can not be singled out for the tragic events. The other parties to the National Peace Accord can not be absolved from their commitments.

Mr. Botha quoted reports of ANC weapons arsenals both inside and outside South Africa. He said the reports were cause for grave concern, but added that there was "therefore all the more reason for us to talk about these matters rather than simply walking away from the negotiating process."

Gatsha Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party, discussing where blame lay for the violence in the country, recalled that the ANC had "suspended" rather than "halted" its armed struggle against the Government.

Other speakers, while acknowledging the progress made by the De Klerk Government towards abolishing apartheid and moving towards a non-racial democracy, stressed its responsibility for the ongoing violence in the country. Though some expressed reservations about what a United Nations monitoring team or Special Representative could achieve, they supported the idea of an international presence in South Africa to foster domestic efforts to achieve peace and forge a democratic system of government.

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In his second special report on United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) dated 14 July, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali indicated that UNTAC military deployment had been proceeding and was now almost complete, "with some 14,300 troops in the country and the remainder en route". The phase II - which commenced on 13 June - should have been completed within four weeks. In fact, he observed, as a result of the refusal of one party to take part in that process, and because of the need to ensure that

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this process is undertaken in such a way as to maintain the military balance between the four parties, barely 5 per cent of the estimated 200,000 soldiers had been cantoned by that date.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali also reiterated that the principles embodied in the Paris Agreements represented "the only viable means of restoring peace and prosperity to all the people of Cambodia" and urged the Cambodian parties to carry out immediately the obligations relating to phase II of the cease-fire, as set out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cambodia on 26 May 1992.

The first special report of the Secretary-General on UNTAC to the Security Council was issued on 12 June.

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The city of Goradze, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, remains blockaded following the refusal by the leaders of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) to allow members of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to enter the city in order to evaluate the humanitarian needs of its population.

In a press communiqué issued yesterday in Geneva, the UNHCR stressed that it wants to visit Goradze, a town of 20,000 people providing shelter for up to 50,000 others displaced by fighting elsewhere in Bosnia-Herzegovia, in order to determine its food and medical needs prior to sending a road convoy of relief goods.

Goradze has been cut off from humanitarian aid convoys since April when the last UNHCR relief supplies reached the community.

In a separate development, UNHCR announced that some 100,000 Afghans have been crossing the border from Pakistan at a rate of 15,000 a day, bringing to nearly 600,000 the number of Afghans who have returned home since the beginning of the year. The rush to the border - which started in late April - shows no sign of abating despite a severe shortage of funds to help the returnees start a new life in their war-torn country.

In a press release dated 15 July, UNHCR also indicated that in the week ending July 12, a record number of Afghans had returned home from Pakistan, as part of the largest and fastest repatriation program assisted by the Agency.

UNHCR spends $2 million a week in providing each returning family with transportation expenses. The cash - which averages out at $23 per returnee, along with some foodstuff provided by the World Food Program (WFP), is probably the only help most of the returning Afghans will receive from the international community to restart their lives.

Despite recent contributions from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, the total amount received to date by UNHCR is less than a third of the $53 million requested for this year's repatriation program.

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The Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, Rolf Ekeus, left last night for Iraq, in order to secure for the United Nations inspection team immediate access to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in Baghdad.

A spokeswoman for the Secretary-General today told correspondents that Mr. Ekeus was expected to arrive in Baghdad tomorrow, Friday, 17 July, and was due back in New York on Sunday, 19 July.

The standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqi authorities and the members of the United Nations Special Commission inspection team started on July 5, when the inspectors, who believe that documents relating to Iraq's ballistic missile proscribed programme are stored in the Ministry of Agriculture, were denied access to the building. The Iraqi side claims that no such documents are stored there and contends that such a search would violate its sovereignty.

Since being denied access to the building, the members of the Commission - who keep a round-the-clock watch to prevent the removal of material from the Ministry - have been subjected to several acts of harrassment. The Security Council demanded on 6 July that the Government of Iraq immediately admit United Nations inspectors to the building and stated that Iraq's refusal to comply constitued a "material and unacceptable breach" of section C of the so-called cease-fire resolution 687 (1991), adopted after the Persian Gulf war.

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Some 80 per cent of the $225 billion flow of foreign direct investment registered in 1990 originated from or was directed to the United States, Japan or the European Economic Community, and many of the developing countries needed assistance to help them attract such investment, United Nations officials told the Washington Press Club today.

In presenting the World Investment Report 1992: Transnational Corporations as Engines of Growth, Hamdan BenAissa, Director of the Transnational Corporations and Management Division of the Departement of Economic and Social Development, explained that the research had focused on the contribution made by transnational corporations to the growth of developing countries.

Azizul Islam, Chief of the Development Policy and Analysis Unit, pointed out that transnational corporations contributed not only capital, but also assisted in the transfer of technology and the development of human resources. However, as David Gold, Chief of the Global Issues Unit, said, those corporations were attracted to the more successful, middle-income developing countries, and many - especially in Africa - had not been able to attract and benefit from their presence. Technical assistance and support through development aid would be needed to help those countries develop as potential hosts to foreign direct investment, he concluded.

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